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R. H. Tawney, embodies Miss Leybourne's findings in an investigation carried out by her on behalf of the Population Investigation Committee. Preliminary papers by Miss Leybourne on the same subject appeared in the *EUGENICS REVIEW* of April 1938 (p. 33) and October 1938 (p. 175).

### Health Records in 1938

THE Registrar General's Statistical Review for 1938 shows that the death-rate for England and Wales was 11.6 per 1,000 persons living. This was 0.8 below the rate for 1937. The only year with a lower rate was 1930 (11.4). When, however, allowance is made for the fact that the proportion of old people in the living population is increasing every year, the corrected or standardized death-rate was 8.5—an improvement of no less than 0.5 on the previous record reached in 1935.

The maternal mortality in the year under review declined for the fourth year in succession and reached a new low level of 2.62 per 1,000 live and still births. (The rates for the four years 1934 to 1937 were 3.78, 3.37, 3.16 and 2.78.) In the same period the mortality of children under one year also reached a new low record—i.e. 53 per 1,000 live births, or 4 per 1,000 below the previous record.

The total of live births registered in 1938 was 621,204, representing a birth rate of 15.1 per 1,000 persons living. This was 0.2 above that for 1937, 0.3 above that for 1936, and 0.7 above that for 1933, which was the lowest ever recorded. The county with the highest rate was Staffordshire, with 17.7, followed by Durham with 17.1. The counties showing the lowest rates were Cardiganshire (11.9) and Cambridgeshire (12.1).

### Negative Eugenics in U.S.A.

MRS. CAROLINE H. ROBINSON, with the support of many notable Americans, is seeking to bring home the importance of negative eugenics in the United States by means of a Model Law for use in State campaigns. Her aim is a comprehensive registration of all feeble-minded children, using annual statistical publicity at tax-paying time in order to induce the public to

vote money for more institutions and parole officers. Briefly, the scheme embraces the reporting of all feeble-minded children from the schools to a central eugenic bureau, which would also receive reports of their marriages and births from the bureaux concerned; the state eugenic board would keep case records up to date from the bureaux, with cross-records from the courts and poor-relief bodies, so that all persons of low mentality should be brought under responsible guardianship, beginning with the worst cases and continuing as fast as possible.

### Elections to the Society

THE following have been elected Fellows (starred) and Members of the *Society* during the past quarter:

Rev. P. J. Andrews, D.D.	Mrs. A. Schreiber.
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# OBITUARY

## Professor Edward Mapother

**B**Y the death of Professor Edward Mapother, which took place on March 20th, the *Eugenics Society* has lost one of its most distinguished and devoted supporters. Professor Mapother's position as head of the Maudsley Hospital, his outstanding intellectual gifts, and his almost unequalled clinical experience, ensured that his views on any subject connected with psychiatry would carry great weight. He was convinced that the study of the heredity of mental disorder was of prime importance in psychiatric research, and at the Maudsley he did all in his power to further it, at one time even paying out of his own pocket the salary and expenses of a research worker appointed for the purpose. The systematic inquiry into mental disorder in twins, which was centred at the Maudsley Hospital and embraced all the L.C.C. mental hospitals, had his thoroughgoing approval. But although keenly aware of the incompleteness of existing knowledge on the transmission of particular types of mental illness, he did not regard this as justifying a negative or purely expectant attitude towards eugenic measures in this field; he felt on the contrary, as every clinician must, that medical prophylaxis and treatment cannot be postponed until we have certainty and a complete scientific basis for all we do. His advice as to the propriety of getting married and having children was often sought by persons who had themselves suffered from mental illness or had relatives

who were thus affected. In such cases Mapother would always offer a definite opinion, usually giving more weight to the positive and eugenic factors than to the dysgenic aspects of the proposed marriage. He used to say, however, with a touch of conscious exaggeration, that the Maudsley Hospital was a thoroughly dysgenic institution, for it aimed at restoring to health—and so to opportunities of procreation—persons with transmissible mental illnesses, who in other circumstances might have spent their lives segregated in a mental hospital.

Professor Mapother was a physician with an extraordinarily high sense of professional and social responsibility. Sometimes he masked this behind witty talk and derision of loose enthusiasm or humbug, but on eugenic matters it led him to express an unmistakably sincere and convinced attitude. On the social and legislative aspects of voluntary sterilization, he was a warm supporter of the policy of the *Eugenics Society*, and we recall with gratitude that it was on our behalf that he gave his extremely valuable evidence before the Brock Committee. His reasoned and cogent advocacy of voluntary sterilization was also shown in an outspoken paper which he read to a Members' Meeting of the *Society* in 1934. It is a sad commentary on our times that his well-directed criticisms of the German Sterilization Laws have at last become acceptable to many who once upheld Nazi eugenic policy as a model for our emulation.

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values about which it is difficult to be entirely objective. "We-feeling," or "ethnocentrism" as the sociologists have called it, is a deep pit into which the unwary are all too prone to tumble. In

these times, when mass sentiment runs high, it is more than ever essential to preserve the balance of our thinking if calm judgment and unbiased criticism are to prevail.—ED.

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